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ABSTRACT

The study described here investigated the refusal strategies of intermediate-level second language learners and the potential for developing sociolinguistic competence in nonnative speakers (NNS) through classroom instruction. Subjects were six college students of English as a Second Language, divided into treatment and control groups. The treatment group was provided instruction on sociolinguistic variables important in refusing in American English. The control group participated in a class on how to make small talk with Americans. Pre- and post-test questionnaires designed to elicit refusals in English were administered. In addition, 2 weeks after instruction, participants were telephoned by a researcher requesting that they perform a burdensome activity at a time known to conflict with their schedules. Questionnaire results indicate that the instruction in refusals had little effect. Data from the telephone interview reveal no effect. Patterns of response found in certain questionnaire situations, and the large disparity between written and spoken refusal strategies, were found to be of special interest and have implications for further research. The questionnaire and a participant profile are appended. (MSE)

"Sticking points": Effects of instruction on NNS refusal strategies

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The refusal strategies of intermediate level second language learners and the potential for developing sociolinguistic competence through instruction is examined in this study. Six university student volunteers were divided into treatment and control groups. The treatment group received an instruction class focusing on sociolinguistic variables important in refusing in American English; the control group participated in a class on how to make conversation (small talk) with Americans.

Immediately prior to and one week following instruction participants completed a discourse questionnaire designed to elicit written refusals. Based loosely on the discourse completion test used by Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990), the questionnaire contained situation descriptions designed to elicit refusals, each followed by an uncompleted dialogue. The questionnaire contained situations in which requests and invitations were made by interlocutors of varied status and social distance. Two weeks after instruction participants were telephoned by a researcher who requested that the participants perform a burdensome activity at a time known to conflict with their schedules.

Results from the questionnaire indicate little effect of instruction. Data from the telephone interview reveal no effect of instruction. Of interest are the patterns of responses found in certain questionnaire situations and the large disparity between the written and spoken refusal strategies. We believe these two findings hold important implications for teaching and future research.

Introduction

The development of sociolinguistic competence, as part of a larger communicative competence, has been widely discussed (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980; Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1982; Thomas, 1983). The potential importance of how speech acts are appropriately realized as part of sociolinguistic competence for non-native speakers (NNSs) has also been discussed in the literature (e.g., Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Blum-Kulka, 1982; Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985). Teachers and materials developers have realized the importance of including information about speech acts and language use in classroom teaching. However, as Wolfson notes:

> Having accepted the necessity to include sociolinguistic information in language instruction, therefore, textbook writers and teachers turned to the literature in sociolinguistics for the information they needed to apply. Unfortunately, too little research into sociolinguistic rules had been done, leading to a situation in which the TESOL profession wanted and needed to apply information that did not yet exist (1989:48).

Several studies have been done which describe speech acts, their use, and differences/similarities cross-culturally. Apologies (e.g., Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Olshtain & Cohen, 1983; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989), requests (e.g., Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), compliments (e.g., Manes & Wolfson, 1981; Manes, 1983; Holmes, 1988), and refusals (e.g.,Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990) have all been studied sufficiently for us to begin to draw an empirical description for pedagogical purposes.

The problem of instruction remains: Is it possible to develop sociolinguistic competence through instruction? What type of instruction would be most beneficial? Do students benefit from instruction of specific speech acts?

Several studies have looked at the development of sociolinguistic competence with regard to SL/FL setting. Schmidt (1983) conducted a longitudinal study of one learner in both EFL and ESL settings. His study indicated that communicative demands in the ESL situation were important for continued development of sociolinguistic competence. However, it was a gradual process; after several years, the learner's performance was still far from native-like. Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) found that length of stay in an SL environment influenced development of native-like speech behavior. This was further supported by their 1988 study. However, this information seems to be discouraging since they note, "we find that generally speaking, response patterns of nonnative speakers (over 10 years) become *similar* to native speakers' responses" (317, underline emphasis ours), and, "after 10 years, nonnative speakers tend to exhibit almost native like tolerance for positive politeness strategies while continuing to maintain their tolerance for conventional indirectness" (318, underline emphasis ours). Takahashi and Beebe (1987) found that learners in an ESL environment showed less negative transfer than learners in an EFL environment. In other words, learners in the ESL environment were less influenced by L_1 norms. So, it seems that length of stay in an second language environment is beneficial for acquiring sociolinguistic competence but insufficient and time-consuming.

A few studies related to classroom language instruction and the development of sociolinguistic competence have also been done. These studies have show that

classroom SL/FL instruction is not sufficient for the development of sociolinguistic competence (Allen, Swain, Harley & Cummins, 1990; Ellis, 1991; Ellis, 1992). In other words, explicit teaching of appropriate speech act realizations and situational features seems to be necessary.

Two studies have looked at the potential for developing appropriate speech act use through instruction. Olshtain and Cohen (1988) considered the effect of instruction on NNS apologies. They looked at several features of the speech act realization and instruction: number and type of semantic formulas, average length of responses, use of intensifiers, a comparison of NS/NNS appropriacy judgements, and students' evaluations of teaching materials which explicitly teach speech act behavior. Pre and post test results (using a discourse questionnaire) indicated some effect of instruction in the type of semantic formula, average length of response, and use of intensifiers.

They concluded that "fine points of speech act behavior such as (1) types of intensification and downgrading, (2) subtle differences between strategy realizations, and (3) consideration of situational features, can and should be taught in the second and foreign language classrooms" (20). However, they did not believe, based on their findings, that overall proficiency (with its concomitant change in behavior) could be attained based on a short period of study.

In a study on the effect of instruction biased toward the explicit formalization of rules for complimenting behavior, Billmyer considered learner production of compliments and replies to compliments (1990:8). Using a natural data collection instrument (conversation partner exchanges), she was able to judge not only learner *intuitions*, as would be revealed by a discourse completion test (DCT) (see Wolfson, 1976; Beebe & Cummings, 1985), but also *production* in face-to-face encounters.

Billmyer found that while uninstructed and instructed learners were able to perform "in roughly equivalent ways on several measures of sociolinguistic appropriateness" (320) and had similarly high levels of linguistic well-formedness, instructed learners showed treatment effects in several ways. They used a greater number of compliments with more variety in the adjectival lexicon and their production of compliments seemed more spontaneous. Their responses to compliments were longer, more closely approximated native speaker norms, and were more similar to a native speaker response profile (318-19).

Another important finding of this study was that there appeared to be an interaction between instruction and proficiency, with higher level learners showing more effect of instruction than lower level learners. However, as Billmyer notes, "This

finding is somewhat speculative due to the fact that only two variables (proficiency and instruction) were examined, and only two measures of performance reanalyzed" (319).

Refusals have been characterized as a "major cross-cultural sticking point for ESL students" (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987:133) which can lead to unintended offense and a breakdown in communication. They are also complex, requiring negotiation and different responses according to the eliciting speech act—invitation, request, offer, or suggestion (Beebe et al., 1990:56). Rubin's comment is to the point:

> One of the more important communicative tasks that confronts a traveler is the recognition of when a speaker has said "no." That is, one needs to be able to recognize that a respondent has refused or denied that which the speaker has demanded, solicited, or offered. Equally, one needs to acquire the appropriate manner in which to respond in the negative when offered, solicited, or demanded something (1983:10).

Thus, refusals merit the attention of teachers and learners.

Several studies have been conducted on refusal strategies (Beebe & Cummings, 1985; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Beebe et. al, 1990). They have identified several important characteristics of American English native speaker refusal strategies. As noted above, two important characteristics of refusals are their variability based on the eliciting speech and their complexity. Refusals are complex because they are made up of a set of strategies and have a certain canonical shape reflected in the order, frequency, and content of semantic formulas. Several of these studies described American English refusal strategies by making cross-cultural comparisons.

Study Design

A quasi-experimental design with a pre and a post test was used to investigate the effects of instruction on ESL learners' acquisition of refusal strategies. Of interest was whether instruction on NS ways of refusing and factors affecting refusals such as status and role relationship would result in differences on discourse questionnaires and in telephone interviews.

The study was limited to instruction of refusals to requests and invitations. Data from Beebe et al. (1990) allowed for the description of refusals to requests (Table 1) and invitations (Table 2). However, there was insufficient information in the literature on refusals to offers and suggestions to provide an adequate description. Additionally, it was thought that both the instructional component and the instrumentation would become too unwieldy if situations covering all four elicitation acts and various

dimensions of social distance were included. Therefore, refusals to offers and suggestions were eliminated from the study.

Table 1: Shape of Refusals to Requests

Equal	Unequal
1. (adjunct)	1. adjunct of positive opinion
2. regret or apology	2. expression of regret ("I'm sorry" with lower status interlocutor)
3. excuse	3. excuse

( ) indicates optional

Table 2: Shape of Refusals to Invitations

Equal	Unequal
1. adjunct (not "Thank you")	1. adjunct
2. regret	2. regret
3. excuse	3. excuse
4. "Thank you"	4. 0

Olshtain and Cohen (1988) and Billmyer (1990) showed that there was some effect of instruction on learners' intuitions and productions of appropriate speech act behavior. Evidence from Beebe and Cummings (1985) indicated that refusals on discourse completion tests (DCTs) and in telephone interviews differ in important ways. These considerations motivated four general research questions:

1. Will refusals on pre and post test DQs show effect of instruction? In what ways?
2. Will production of refusals in telephone interviews show effect of instruction? In what ways?
3. How will refusals given on the DQs differ from those elicited in the telephone interviews?
4. In general, what refusal strategies will NNSs employ?

Research Methodology

The participants were six intermediate level NNSs studying at a university English language center in Philadelphia. Three were women and three were men.

They ranged in age from 19-27, and their length of stay in the U.S. ranged from one month to two years. Their native languages were: Japanese (4), Spanish (1), and Greek (1) (Appendix 1).

Students' schedules included three required courses: Spoken English, Written English, and an elective. The instructional component for this study was conducted in a classroom at the students' university from 3:15-4:45 PM, after regular classes were finished for the day.

Students were determined to be at "intermediate" level based on placement interviews conducted at the beginning of the term. In addition, the study was conducted after mid-term when there had been an opportunity to move students to other levels if the current level seemed inappropriate. This gave us some confidence that students were at a similar proficiency level relative to other groups of students studying at the language center.

Intermediate students were chosen for several reasons. Because this was the largest group of students attending the language center, the selection of intermediate students gave us the largest group to draw from. While some researchers have proposed that advanced learners benefit more from this type of instruction (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Billmyer, 1990), this does not preclude benefit of instruction for intermediate level students. In addition, based on discussions with students, we found that students at intermediate level have a strong desire to talk to Americans, and experience frustration in trying to do so. Students often seem to "get stuck" at intermediate level, remaining at this level longer than at a lower level (where they make rapid progress) or a higher level (where they begin to enter university courses). We believed that any instruction which might help them open the door to further interactions with Americans would be appreciated and helpful. Thus, the choice of intermediate level was based largely on practical and pedagogical reasons.

Participants were mixed to the extent possible so that neither the control group nor the treatment group was dominated by students from the same Spoken class. In addition, they were mixed according to native language/country and length of time in the U.S. We chose to make each group (treatment and control) as varied as possible, rather than focusing on one national/language group, to encourage as much participation as possible for the pilot study.

A questionnaire was distributed among the intermediate level classes to establish native language, native country, and length of time in the U.S. Information from the questionnaire was used to divide students into two groups: treatment and control. The students were invited to participate in a free conversation class having to

do with "speaking to Americans." Both the topic and the class label "conversation" were intended to cater to student interests. Prior to this time, students had frequently talked about wanting more time "to just talk," wanting to have more opportunities to talk to Americans, and finding it difficult to start conversations with Americans. Students signed up for the conversation class in advance. Classroom teachers encouraged participation, but it was made clear that there was no connection between the "conversation class" and the regular spoken class (especially in terms of evaluations, etc.). Participation was voluntary on the part of the students.

A discourse questionnaire (DQ) was administered at the beginning of the conversation class as a pre test. Students understood that they were participating in a research project and that the DQ was part of that project. They were not told that the instructional component itself was also part of the project. The conversation class was presented as a kind of payment for participation in the research project.

Following administration of the DQ, the six participants were placed into treatment and control groups, and directed to the appropriate classroom. The control group took part in a conversation class focusing on getting to know Americans as friends and using small talk topics to begin conversations. The treatment group looked at how sociolinguistic variables affect conversation, focusing on refusals.

One full week after the treatment, a post test (the same DQ with items reordered) was administered during the students' regular Written English classes. Approximately two weeks after the post test, a follow-up telephone call was made to each student. The caller attempted to elicit refusals over the telephone by asking students to participate in a burdensome activity at a time which was known to conflict with their class schedule.

Responses to pre test, post test, and follow-up telephone call were analyzed for effect of instruction and to ascertain what refusal strategies students employed.

The DQ (Appendix 2) consisted of brief descriptions of various situations, each followed by an uncompleted dialogue. Participants were instructed to place themselves in the situation and respond as they would in actual conversation. Of the six situations designed to elicit refusals, three requests, and three invitations were made by interlocutors of equal, lower, and higher status (Table 3).

The DCT has been used widely in studies of cross-cultural variation of speech act realization (Beebe & Takahashi, 1987; Beebe et al., 1990; Blum-Kulka, 1982). The present study's instrument was based on the DCT used by Beebe et. al in their study of pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals (1990).

Table 3: Description of Discourse Questionnaire

Situation No.		Situation Type	Participant Status	Social Distance
Pre	Post			
6	7	request	higher	acquaintance
7	2		equal	stranger
1	9		lower	acquaintance
4	3	invitation	higher	acquaintance
2	6		equal	friend
9	4		lower	acquaintance

Several modifications were made to adapt the DCT to the needs of the present study. The dialogues and descriptions of the situations were shortened and simplified to make the test more readily understandable for intermediate ESL participants. Nonessential details and wording were removed to minimize the potential reactive effects of the participants using the language of the test that was not in their own interlanguage (Cohen & Olshtain, 1992).

The situation descriptions contained all the information necessary to determine the appropriate sociolinguistic response. Written responses to the participants' refusals (or acceptances) were omitted. Thus, the correct response was not contingent upon the requester's rejoinder which followed the participant's response. Cohen has noted the difference between a written role play with a rejoinder, known as a DCT, and one without a fixed response (personal communication, 1992). A completion test without a rejoinder is best referred to as a discourse questionnaire. The researchers believed that elimination of the rejoinder from the test would both simplify the task for the participants and prevent responses from being "framed" within the dialogue (thus limiting the range of responses to those which fit the rejoinder).

The questionnaire was first trialled by NNSs who were at a slightly more proficient level than the study's participants. A higher level was used because the difference in proficiency between intermediate (the level of the study's participants) and high intermediate (the level of the preliminary test takers) was much less than the difference between intermediate and low intermediate. As an additional check, the questionnaire was read by two instructors of the low intermediate class. They reported that they believed the questionnaire would be comprehensible to students in the low intermediate group. Wording which proved to be problematic was altered and some situations were replaced. The final version of the DQ consisted of six refusals to equal,

lower, and higher status interlocutors—four of which were directed to acquaintances, one to a stranger, and one to an intimate or friend. Three similar situations designed to elicit acceptances were included as distractors. The post test was identical to the pre test; only the ordering of the situations was altered.

In their review of data collection methods, Beebe and Cummings found the DCT to be a useful measure for determining the perceived requirements for appropriate refusals in different situations and their canonical shape in the minds of the refusers. Beebe and Cummings point out, however, that DCTs "are not natural speech and do *not* accurately reflect natural speech or even unconscious, elicited speech" (1985:13). They found DCT responses to differ from speech in actual interaction in a variety of ways. The amount of talk, the number of turns, the number of repetitions and elaborations, and the variety of responses was greater in real interaction than in the written responses. This aspect of their findings supports the work of those who insist that DCTs can not replace natural speech in investigations of language use (Wolfson, 1989; Wolfson, Marmor & Jones, 1989).

To gauge the effect of treatment on the refusals provided in actual interaction, participants were contacted by telephone approximately two weeks following the instruction. The researcher identified herself as an employee of the university's Office of Student Life. (No such office exists.) Participants were first asked to answer a few questions about their experiences at the university and in their English language program. This was done in order to form a connection between the caller and participants. It was reasoned that known membership in the same academic community would decrease social distance between the researcher and participants and would increase participants' investment in the call and sense of obligation to the caller. In other words, it was believed that after a brief conversation with someone they thought to be part of their academic network, they would be less likely to hang up upon hearing the request and more inclined to engage in some form of negotiation. Beebe and Cummings (1985) used a similar tactic (the caller identified herself as a member of the same professional organization) to decrease social distance between caller and participant in their study of data collection methods.

Two requests were made of the participants: both were explained to be part of an international fair at the university (a fictitious event). Participants were first asked to give a speech to an American audience at a time during which they were known to have English class. The requests were all phrased in the same manner:

"I was wondering if you would like to speak to the audience for a half hour about your perspective as an international student at Drexel."

Participants were also asked to set up a table on the day of their final exam:

"Would you be able to set up a table with food and information about your country's customs, culture, and stuff like that?"

Participants who gave noncommittal answers received follow-up calls until they explicitly accepted or refused. These requests were selected not only because they conflicted with the participants' schedules but because they were considered to be extremely burdensome tasks. The requests also seemed to be the same sort made frequently of foreigners. Students have reported being asked to play the piano at their host family's church or speak about their country at a community meeting. They have also reported not knowing how to refuse these types of requests.

Instructional Component

Promoting *awareness* as a means of aiding language acquisition has been proposed by Thomas (1983), Sharwood-Smith (1988), Schmidt and Frota (1986), and Schmidt (1990). Schmidt states that "intake is what learners consciously notice. This requirement of noticing is meant to apply equally to all aspects of language (lexicon, phonology, grammatical form, pragmatics), and can be incorporated into many different theories of second language acquisition" (149).

Olshtain and Cohen maintain that sociolinguistic awareness is an essential first step to further development:

> It is therefore a level of residual awareness that we wish to promote as the objective of any explicit course of study. We believe that once such awareness is established, the learners will be less prone to commit pragmatic failures both as producers and receivers of speech act behavior, and that this awareness might ultimately speed up their approximation of native behavior (1988:21).

Thomas believes that a student's metapragmatic ability, "the ability to analyse language use in a conscious manner," (1983:98) must be developed in order to avoid pragmatic failure (which comes about when students are unaware of the relationship between the surface structure and pragmatic force of an utterance).

According to Takahashi and Beebe, awareness of cross-cultural differences is particularly important:

> We believe that *awareness* of cross-cultural differences in the rules of speaking will greatly improve a student's sociolinguistic competence. If the student is made aware, for example, that the refusal of a piece of cake can be as simple as "No thanks," he or she may avoid refusing, as one Japanese student did, by warning, "If I eat any more, my belly will stick out" (1986:178).

Thus awareness at various levels was seen to be an important part of the classroom component: awareness of cross-cultural differences; awareness of sociolinguistic factors which affect speech act realization choice (setting, status, social distance, etc.); awareness which would foster further learning.

Billmyer summarized necessary teaching/learning conditions as follows: comprehensible input containing the speech act forms; explicit teaching of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic features; ample opportunity for self-discovery in a data-rich environment (implicit teaching); and, practice opportunities to achieve "fluency" (1990:108-9). In addition, materials must be based on accurate descriptions of native speaker baseline data.

While materials writers are beginning to produce materials which are sensitive to sociolinguistic and pragmatic needs as well as linguistic, most of these texts are dependent on illustrative dialogues (non-authentic) and lists of "useful" phrases (Billmyer, Jakar & Lee, 1989). Explicit teaching of the speech act and of important sociolinguistic features is less common. Taking these facts into account, we designed our own materials for the lesson.

Description

Both treatment and control groups had similar activities in the instructional component: discussion of personal experiences, reading and analysis of dialogues, explicit teaching, and role play practices. Both classes had an initial warm-up with a general question about student experiences in the U.S. Originally, we had hoped to use audiotaped authentic conversations (NS-NS and NS-NNS) for input, but this proved impossible for practical reasons. While classes were planned for 90 minutes, both were changed to 70 minutes due to late arrival of students.

Each lesson began with an introduction to the lesson topic and a warm-up discussion using a teacher question/elicit structure. This segment of the lesson focused on eliciting responses from students based on their own experiences. This was included to get the students personally involved in the topic, and to establish a connection between the lesson and students' lives. The two lessons also had similar

closings: there was a brief discussion of possible ways to apply the information to their daily lives and an "optional homework" assignment was given.[1]

Control

This lesson was based on excerpts from *Talking With Americans* (Sharpe, 1984). In order to avoid unintentional instruction which might overlap with the treatment group, the control group teacher was informed of the purpose of the study and was asked to follow the lesson plan carefully.

The control group lesson was divided into four segments: an introduction (as discussed above), a discussion, practice activities, and a closing (as discussed above). The "discussion" segment included a short reading on "small talk" followed by discussion of using small talk to begin conversations with Americans. The practice segment included several activities: oral dialogue reading, comparative analysis and evaluation of two dialogues, a look at possible small talk topics, four "What can you say?" situations (read the situation and respond), and several role plays. Authentic input and opportunities for implicit learning were not included.

Treatment

The treatment lesson was also divided into four segments: the introduction and closing (as described above), a cross-cultural comparison segment, and an explicit teaching segment. The majority of the lesson was spent on awareness building and explicit teaching. There were some practice activities, but these were limited. Authentic input and opportunities for implicit learning were not included.

The cross-cultural comparisons segment included several activities for building awareness and practice. The first encouraged students to consider a variety of situations and imagine what they would do or say. This was followed by a discussion of what each student would do or say in the native country/language. This activity was intended to build awareness about what factors influence language (social status, setting, etc.) and about possible cultural differences. It also provided an opportunity for the teacher to gauge students' existing knowledge about useful refusal phrases. Two dialogue practice activities followed: a jigsaw dialogue and a dialogue to read aloud. (This was useful in the next segment, explicit teaching. Phrases the students already knew didn't need to be taught and could be referred to in the discussion.)

Because we were unable to obtain authentic data in time for the lesson,[2] "created" dialogues were used. This also eliminated the possibility of an authentic listening component which we believe would have been optimal. As a kind of

mitigating force against the artificiality of the dialogues, and as a further awareness activity, students were asked to analyze the dialogues. Finally, students brainstormed about factors which might influence what they would say in each situation. The purpose of this activity was both to check and to raise awareness of sociolinguistic factors influencing language.

The third segment of the lesson focused on explicit teaching of refusals to requests and invitations. A very limited set of data and a simplified explanation of refusal strategies was selected for explicit teaching based on the available time and student level. A chart of refusal strategies for requests and invitations was sketched on the board and discussed (Table 4).

Table 4: Refusal Strategies

Requests	Invitations
statement of positive opinion (say something to make the person feel good)	some kind of filler such as a "Well," "hmm," "Let me see" (a 'starter')
a regret is optional	express regret
excuse	excuse

In particular, the following were taught:

it is best to "say something to make the person feel good" (a statement of positive opinion) before refusing when there is a request. Suggested possibilities were, "That's a good idea," or, "I'd love to...";

before refusing an invitation, we often use some kind of "starter" such as "Well," "Hmm," or, "Let me see";

"I'm sorry" is often overused by NNSs. "That's too bad" was discussed as a possible substitute;

excuses are essential elements in refusals; excuses should be specific; and, excuses to friends are often more detailed.

A set of discussion questions with situations for refusing was handed out and each situation was discussed. These situations were intended to reinforce the explicit instruction. Due to time constraints, the last activity in this segment (practice and roleplay of the original situations) was omitted.

Data Analysis

The DQ and telephone interview responses were coded using a modified version of the classification scheme for refusal strategies used by Beebe et al. (1990) (Appendix 3). For example, if a participant responded to a professor's invitation to a dinner party by saying, "Yes, I would like to go to your dinner party. But this Saturday I'm busy. I'm so sorry. I'm not able to attend," this was coded as: [adjunct: statement of positive opinion] [excuse, reason, or explanation] [statement of regret] [statement of negative willingness/ability].

Interrater reliability was established by first using the trial questionnaire to discuss categories and establish agreement on coding. Next, the two raters coded sample questionnaires from the trial group independently. These coded responses were discussed to verify agreement on the coding categories and to consider any changes necessary to the coding system (discussed below). All responses from the DQs and the telephone transcripts were then coded independently by each rater. The coded responses were checked for any discrepancies in coding. Discrepancies were reconciled by discussion between the two raters until consensus was reached. Discussion was conducted with reference to how other responses on the questionnaires and in the telephone transcripts had been coded. In each case, several previously coded responses were considered to establish reliability across the data.

It was impossible to fully account for each response using the original version of the coding system (Beebe et al., 1990). The revised system divides responses into four broad categories: acceptances, direct refusals, indirect refusals, and adjuncts to refusals. Several additions were made to the system in order to describe all of the strategies employed by participants. The category "true postponement" was created for responses whose intent was not to refuse but to put off the event to a specific time in the future. These strategies differed from "acceptances that function as refusals," such as "I guess" and also from "promises of future acceptance" such as "maybe next time." To account for the telephone interview responses, the categories, "request information" and "acceptance" were added. A category for a questionnaire strategy which "question(ed) validity of the request," was also added. The category, "acceptance that functions as a refusal," was collapsed when no difference was discernible in the data between its sub-categories: "unspecific or indefinite reply" and "lack of enthusiasm."

Exceptional strategies which were linguistically comprehensible but were clearly not appropriate to the situation and/or did not fit the coding scheme were coded as "inappropriate or uncodable." Refusing to sign a petition by saying "ask me something easier," or, "ask somebody else," are examples of responses which fall into this category. Responses which were were linguistically incomprehensible or uninterpretable from the telephone transcriptions were coded as "ambiguous."

In the analysis of the written responses, a quantitative comparison was made of the treatment and control groups' differences between pre and post tests. A qualitative analysis of the frequency and specificity of excuses in different situations was then performed. The various strategies employed on specific questions were examined. In analyzing the spoken data, responses from treatment and control groups were compared. The strategies employed by participants on the telephone were compared with their written responses to the most similar questionnaire situation (situation six).

Discourse Questionnaire

Frequency Counts

Following Beebe et al. (1990) a frequency count of coded responses for treatment and control groups was performed (Appendix 4). Analysis of the frequency count revealed little variation in the number or range of strategies employed by participants in the treatment and control groups. However, response differences were found in two areas: excuse production and situation context. The number of excuses provided from pre to post tests by respondents in treatment and control groups differed slightly. Trends in the data suggest that participants may have been sensitive to some situational variables in the questionnaire. Due to the small number of participants, differences could not be measured statistically. Subsequently, a qualitative analysis of the data was performed.

Overall Number of Excuses

Prior research has shown that excuses are an important component of American English refusals. Beebe et al. (1990) reports that 100% of American English refusals to requests made by a status equals contained an excuse. Thus, excuses appear to be a crucial part of refusals. The importance of providing an excuse in refusals to invitations and requests was emphasized in the treatment class. Only 68% of the refusals provided by participants on the pre test contained excuses; an increase in the number of excuses provided by the treatment group from pre to post test would suggest that instruction was effective. Of course, the *quantity of excuses* does not

reflect the overall *appropriateness of the refusals*. However, in light of our desire to remain consistent with Beebe et al. (1990) and due to the lack of full descriptions of NS refusals, this seemed the most viable method of analysis.

Comparison of the overall number of excuses indicated that treatment may have had an effect: across all questionnaire situations, participants in the treatment group used two more excuses in their post tests than in their pre tests; the control group provided four fewer excuses in their post tests than in their pre tests. It is important to note that the student who was considered to be "most advanced" by his teachers, Yuki, was responsible for the treatment group increase. The other participants in the treatment group did not alter the total number of excuses employed from pre to post test.

Number of Excuses in Specific Situations

An examination of the responses to specific situations showed that there was one situation where the difference in the number of excuses provided by the treatment and control groups from pre to post test was greatest. Responses to Situation 2/6, an invitation to study at the house of a "friend," showed a slight increase in the number of excuses provided by the treatment group (+2) from pre to post test, and the largest decrease of excuses from pre to post test for control group responses (-4) across all situations (Table 5).

The meaning of "friend" as inalienable friend, casual friend, expedient friend, or close friend[3] was not discussed in the treatment or control classes. In the treatment class, the different meanings of "friend" were not distinguished by the teacher or by the participants during the discussion of the necessity or specificity of the excuses. One student did show awareness of the fact that responses varied according to intimacy by asking, "A good friend or just a friend?" when taking the pre test. All of the participants said they thought less detailed excuses were required for "good friends" than "acquaintances," again reflecting an understanding of the effect of intimacy on responses. (They felt lengthy explanations were unnecessary because "a friend would know.") Despite this lack of clarification about the *meaning* of "friend," the teacher emphasized the importance of giving detailed excuses to "friends."[4] The increase in number of excuses from pre to post in the responses to this situation may be the result of the importance placed on giving specific excuses to friends in the treatment class and would then be evidence of the effect of treatment.

Table 5: Number of Excuses per Response by Situation

Control

Situation	Pre	Post	Difference
1/9	2	2	0
2/6	4	1	-3
4/3	1	2	+1
6/7	2	2	0
7/2	1	0	-1
9/4	2	1	-1
Totals	12	8	-4

Treatment

Situation	Pre	Post	Difference
1/9	3	3	0
2/6	3	4	+1
4/3	1	3	+2
6/7	3	2	-1
7/2	2	2	0
9/3	3	3	0
Totals	15	17	+2

Content of Excuses

It is possible to gauge the effectiveness of the treatment not only by analyzing the numbers of excuses in the refusals, but also the content and specificity of the excuses. Beebe et al. suggest that "excuses are perhaps the most promising area for content analysis" (1990:66). The researchers' personal experience indicates that content and specificity of excuses is important, but problematic for NNSs. Students are frequently unsure about the amount of detail required in their excuses, often supplying not enough or too much. Since the importance of giving specific excuses to friends was stressed in the treatment group, a change in the content or specificity of the excuses provided by the treatment group might signify that treatment was effective.

Excuses were rated for specificity using a three point scale. General, non-specific excuses such as "I am very busy this week," or "I have no extra time," were coded as +1. Excuses which had one element of specificity by naming a person, place or activity were coded as +2 for example, "I have *an appointment* at that time." Excuses which named two elements, such as "I have to see with *my friend* to *have a dinner*," were coded as +3.

In situations where excuses were provided in both pre and post tests, there was very little overall variation in the level of specificity for treatment and control groups. One member of the treatment group greatly increased the specificity of his excuse from pre to post test.

Teru - pre test: (specificity +1)

Yes, I would like to go to your dinner party. but this Saturday, *I am very busy,* I'm so sorry. I'm not able to attend.

Teru - post test: (specificity +3)

Yeah. I want to go to your house for dinner this Saturday, *but I have some appointment with my friends*. I'm so sorry I can't go.

While there are no such examples in the control group, this single example of increase in specificity cannot be taken as an indication of effect of treatment. The overall constant level of excuse specificity from pre to post tests across groups indicates little effect of instruction.

Unusual Responses and Situational Variables

Certain questionnaire situations consistently elicited refusal strategies which were not found in responses to other situations. Refusal strategies which provided a "(true) postponement," "statement of (an) alternative," or which "set (a) condition for future or past acceptance" were considered to be unusual because they appeared in only three situations (1/9, 6/7, and 9/4).

The three unusual refusal strategies occurred in responses to situations which contained status differences. Two of the three situations which elicited unusual responses were set in a context familiar to the participants, a school or university setting. It seems that all three of these situations were *high obligation* situations in which the participants felt standard refusal strategies were inappropriate or not sufficient.

Strategies which were coded as "true postponements" appeared six times in response to Situation 1/9 and twice in responses to Situation 6/7.

1/9. You are a very busy professor. A student wants to speak with you about an assignment, but you do not have any time this week.

Student: Could I meet with you tomorrow morning to discuss my assignment?

Yukiko - pre test:

I'm sorry I have no time to meet you this week, because I'm very busy. *If you are not in a hurry, I can meet you next week.*

Rina - post test:

I'm sorry. I don't have any time this week. *Could you ask me that next week? I'm going to find out when I can make it.*

Maria - pre test:

Sure, but I don't have much time. *If you come here tomorrow at 10:00 am, we can talk about 15 minutes.*

This situation held certain expectations because of the role relationship and because it was familiar. The high number of "(true) postponements" may be reflective of the students' perceptions of the obligation involved. The students who trialled the DQ gave responses which also showed high numbers of true postponements to this situation. When asked about this, there was agreement among them that the teacher had an obligation to meet with students, that it was the teacher's job. We concluded that the amount of obligation induced by the situation was an important factor in the determining the response. The "(true) postponement" seems to be a way of refusing without refusing, by offering an alternative time.

One participant was responsible for both "(true) postponements" in Situation 6/7:

6/7. Your professor wants you to help plan a class party. But you are very busy this week.

Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?

Rina - pre test:

I'm sorry. I don't think so, but may be next week I can help you. *If you still need a help next week, please tell me. I'll help you.*

Rina - post test:

Well. actually I don't think so. I'm afraid I'm very busy this week. I'm so sorry *but if you need a help next week, too, please let me know. I'll help you.*

That she was the only participant to use this strategy in this situation may be attributable to her different interpretation of the time frame involved. While the other

participants seem to have conceptualized the help as being needed immediately (this week), Rina obviously did not. Regardless, her postponement reflects a strong desire to meet the request made of her and to avoid refusing her teacher.

Responses containing strategies which "set (a) condition for future or past acceptance" appeared two times in responses to Situations 1/9 and three times in responses to Situation 9/4. Two examples are representative of these responses:

> **1/9.** You are a very busy professor. A student wants to speak with you about an assignment, but you do not have any time this week.
>
> Student: Could I meet with you tomorrow morning to discuss my assignment?
>
> **Teru - post test:**
>
> I'm sorry, I don't have enough time this week. *But I will effort to make a time next week.*
>
> **9/4** You are the boss of a big corporation and one of your employees is having a big party. You will not be able to attend.
>
> Employee: I am having a party on Saturday night. I was wondering if you would like to come.
>
> **Yiannis - pre test:**
>
> Sorry, I want but I can't this Saturday. *Why you didn't tell me before?* I make schedule for this Saturday. Thank you a lot but I can't.

In both of these situations the participant is being invited or requested to do something by a lower status interlocutor. It was reasoned that in these situations participants felt obligated to accept but also had the authority to defer responsibility for meeting the obligation.

Refusals which contained a "statement of (an) alternative" occurred only in the responses to two situations. In Situation 6/7, where the refuser is of lower status, the statement suggests an alternative that the *refuser* could do.

> **6/7.** Your professor wants you to help plan a class party. But you are very busy this week.
>
> Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?

Teru - pre test:

Oh, I'm sorry. I'm very busy this week, so I can't help you. *If I met some my friends, I will tell my friends about this.*

Teru - post test:

I'm sorry, I want to help you, but I'm so busy this week. *If you need some people, I will ask my friends.*

A "statement of (an) alternative" in which the refuser suggests the *requester* do something was only produced by one participant for Situation 1/9; this occurred in both the pre and post test. One interpretation of this is that when the refuser is of higher status, it is possible to suggest an alternative action for the requester, in this case the student, to perform.

1/9. You are a very busy professor. A student wants to speak with you about an assignment, but you do not have any time this week.

Student: Could I meet with you tomorrow morning to discuss my assignment?

Yiannis - pre test:

Really sorry, I can't this week, *please tell with someone from the class*, but I will try to find little bit time this week or next week.

Yiannis - post test:

Sorry I can't this week. *Please discuss with some classmate*, and if you have any questions ask me, next week. But I'll try to find time this week, sorry but.

The small number of participants make the data susceptible to one individual's response preferences. It is important to note that one participant was responsible for almost half of the responses coded as "statement of alternative" or "postponement." It unclear whether she was exceptionally sensitive to obligations, or if certain situations were obligation inducing.

Exceptions in the Data

Two utterances[5] on the questionnaire were coded as ambiguous. Three strategies were coded as "inappropriate or uncodable." Two of these were judged to be inappropriate attempts to "repair" the damage done by the refusal. Both of these repair attempts occurred in the responses to Situation 9/4 in which a boss is refusing a party invitation from an employee. One participant ended his response with "Please

have a good day," the other by saying, "I hope you'll have a great time." It is interesting that both of these unusual uses of formulaic responses are found in the situation and role, "boss of a big corporation," which was unfamiliar to the participants.

Telephone Interviews

The strategies employed in the responses to the researcher's request to give a speech or set up a table differed greatly from those used on the questionnaire and also varied widely among participants. No consistent differences between the treatment and control groups' responses were found, indicating that the effect of treatment was not measurable using this instrument, not transferable to a setting outside the classroom, or non-existent.

Overall, participants employed infrequently the strategies which were commonly used in the DQ. "Excuses, reasons, explanations," and, "statements of regret," while used frequently and appropriately on the questionnaire, were rarely employed on the telephone. For all participants there seemed to be a gap between their demonstrated knowledge on the questionnaire and their production on the telephone. This gap was not bridged by instruction.

The percentage of excuses per total number of strategies employed by each participant in the pre test, post test, and telephone interview demonstrates this gap (Table 6). A slight increase in the percentage of excuses is noticeable from pre to post test for the treatment group; there is a slight decrease in the post test percentages of the control group. By far the greatest difference is the drop in the percentage of excuses provided from questionnaire to telephone responses for both groups. Maria, the exception, only had six conversational turns, three of which were excuses.

Table 6: Percent of Excuses/Total Number of Strategies by Participant

Participant	Pre test	Post test	Telephone
Treatment			
Maria	25	22	50
Teru	30	32	0
Yuki	18	32	19
Control			
Rina	12	19	05
Yiannis	17	09	0
Yukiko	21	13	10

A drop in the percentage of regrets per total number of strategies from the questionnaire responses to the telephone responses is also visible (Table 7). Again, a pattern which indicates that the participants were not able to produce orally what they were clearly capable of forming on their written tests is apparent.

The participants' overall reactions to the caller's requests fell evenly into one of three categories. Two subjects were judged as having refused appropriately (Yukiko and Maria); two participants accepted, one with enthusiasm (Yuki) and one with obvious reluctance (Yiannis); and two gave refusals which were clearly inadequate and inappropriate (Teru and Rina). Treatment and control group participants were equally present in each category, suggesting again that the treatment did not have an effect on the participants' telephone responses.

Table 7: Percent of Regrets/Total Number of Strategies by Participant

Participant	Pre test	Post test	Telephone
Treatment			
Maria	10	13	0
Teru	30	32	0
Yuki	18	0	0
Control			
Rina	16	24	10
Yiannis	19	35	0
Yukiko	29	40	16

The strategies employed by the participants on the telephone are best compared with responses to the most similar questionnaire situation. In Situation 6/7 a professor requests help with a class party: a higher status acquaintance makes a request of a lower status interlocutor. Because early in the telephone interview the researcher established that she and the participant belonged to the same academic community and then proceeded to engage in conversation, it is possible to consider them acquaintances. It was reasoned that the participants would assume the caller to be a teacher or someone of parallel status in the university; we can tentatively assume the caller held a higher status than the participants. Thus, both the researcher on the telephone and the teacher in the written questionnaire were higher status acquaintances who were associated with their university and making requests of the participants. Based on these contextual parallels, it is possible to make a rough comparison between the responses given in each situation.

Yukiko used some of the same strategies in her pre test, post test, and telephone response: "excuse, reason, explanation," "statement of regret," and, "negative willingness/ ability." Only on the telephone did she produce a "repetition of part of (a) request" and a "request (for) information," both of which seemed to be products of the actual interaction and negotiation:

> *On the eighteenth, next Wednesday?...*[6]
> *speech?...*
> *Wednesday. ...*

She did use three of the same strategies across testing situations; the DQ seemed to reflect her oral responses fairly accurately.

Maria, mentioned above, used an excuse effectively three times in her telephone interview:

> *I think that I am not prepared to speaking, to speak half an hour.*
> *My English is not enough now.*
> *I have class that day.*

In her written response, however, she offered two alternatives which she did not do on the telephone. In her post test she expressed regret, which she also did not do on the telephone. It seems either she was unable to employ these strategies in actual interaction or she felt less obligated to do so.

Yuki only employed one common strategy in both his written and oral responses: "excuse, reason, explanation." In his written responses he used "negative ability or willingness"; strategies which he did not use on the telephone. Because he accepted on the telephone, this difference is to be expected.

Yiannis employed entirely different strategies on his questionnaire and telephone responses. While he offered an "excuse, reason, explanation" and a "statement of alternative" in the questionnaire, he requested empathy on the telephone:

> *What time I be gone, because it is difficult for me.*
> *Because it is difficult for me. I' m the only one from Greece. You want to know now?*

He did eventually accept the researcher's telephone request. It is unclear how much of his acceptance was due to his sense of obligation to assist the caller and what part of it was simply a result of not kn wing how to manipulate the language adequately.

Rina expressed "regret" and used an "excuse, reason, explanation" in her pre test, post test, and telephone interview responses. But the percentage of both of these strategies fell considerably from the questionnaire to the telephone situation. In the DQ, she relied on a statement of "negative ability/willingness" but not on the telephone. In actual interaction, there was a greater number of strategies coded as "acceptance that functions as a refusal," suggesting an inability or unwillingness to refuse directly:

(pause) little bit
(pause) yea
yea, maybe
maybe I can do it

Teru employed a range of strategies in his questionnaire responses: "statement or regret," "excuse, reason, explanation," "statement of negative ability," and "wish." None of these strategies, which he clearly was capable of producing on his questionnaire, were used in his telephone interviews:

ahh..um...nothing specially
yes, not really, nothing specially

Discussion

We found little effect for instruction on the post test. Across all questionnaire situations participants in the treatment group used two more excuses in their post tests than in their pre tests. Responses seemed to indicate a sensitivity to certain situational factors such as familiar versus unfamiliar and role relationship. Patterns of responses indicate that some situations induce a higher sense of obligation. No effect of instruction was observable in the telephone interactions. These findings agree with Cohen and Olshtain (1988).

The most surprising finding was the difference between the responses given in the telephone interview and on the DQs. While Beebe and Cummings' study with NSs (1985) found that telephone interactions caused more elaboration, more negotiations, and more total talk; our work with NNSs, and Olshtain and Cohen's study (1988), led us to expect less negotiation, less elaboration, and less total talk. We were, however, surprised at the *degree* of disparity.

Methodological Considerations

There are several methodological considerations which need to be taken into account when reviewing this study. The small subject size was necessary for practical reasons and it proved valuable for doing a detailed analysis. However, the small sample size prohibited any statistical analysis and limits the generalizability of the study.

We solicited students from various national/linguistic backgrounds in an attempt to increase the number of participants; however, it might be more efficacious to control for this variable by including participants from only one national/linguistic background.

A more complete description of American English refusals is needed. Our baseline was derived from a cross-cultural study rather than a full description of the speech act in American English. In particular, there were few empirical guidelines to follow when deciding how to limit the description for the treatment lesson. Important considerations such as, "Which elements are most essential in a refusal?" and, "How significant is order?" could not adequately be taken into account. We did feel confident, however, in assuming excuses to be essential since they occur across all refusal situations.

There were several problems in data collection and analysis. Pausing might be an important strategy in spoken refusals; however, technical problems while recording the telephone interviews restricted this type of analysis. Follow-up interviews with the participants might have provided insights regarding their intent on the telephone. A closer match up between the telephone situation and the situation on the DQ might enable a more cogent comparison.

Testing situations varied slightly from pre to post test. While the pre test was administered at the beginning of the voluntary lesson, the post test was given during the participants' Written English class. All Written English class members took this test. One of the participants was absent; the Written class teacher gave him the post test the next day. Another participant brought her friend to the treatment group lesson. This "extra" participant was in a different class and was not available for post testing.

Instructional Component

Much still remains unclear regarding the teaching component of the study. We still know nothing about which portion (if any) was most effective. It is possible that instruction was effective on a level not recognizable by the present study's measures.

In particular, if awareness activities are useful for facilitating and/or accelerating learning, it is likely that no effect would show up in the short term. On the other hand, it is equally possible that this type of instruction would not be effective. More direct teaching, more practice activities, use of authentic data and/or a listening component —any of these may have been more effective individually or together.

In addition, the amount of time for instruction may have been a problem. The total period of instruction was only 70 minutes. While there were practical reasons for this time limit, the time may have been insufficient for mastering this material. It is also possible that the "one-shot" lesson, which does not allow for review practice and recycling of concepts, is less effective than several shorter lessons would be.

A final problem in the instructional component is that inaccurate information may have been given in the teacher's instructions that "excuses to a friend are more explicit." This may have been a misinterpretation of the Beebe et al. (1990) study which used to term "friend" but did not define it.

Implications

Possible effectiveness or ineffectiveness of awareness activities could not be determined; however, we believe they may be useful in the long term and might accelerate learning. We agree with Cohen and Olshtain's (1988) conclusions that "fine points of speech act behavior...can and should be taught in the second and foreign language classrooms" (20). Billmyer's findings (1990) also support this. Her study, which took place over a longer period of time, showed that compliments and compliment responses from instructed students more closely approximated native speaker norms (1990:319). However, as noted above, this can not be directly attributed to any portion of the instruction.

The student who wanted to know, "A good friend or just a friend?" when filling out the DQ gives evidence of sensitivity to sociolinguistic variables. Discussions during the lesson showed that students not only agreed with each other about what sociolinguistic factors influence linguistic choices, but also agreed with the teacher. Thus, it may be unnecessary to do extensive teaching about *which* factors influence linguistic choice; however, it is probably necessary to include instruction about the *interpretation* of those factors.[7] And in terms of teaching materials, responses to situations on the DQ and in the lesson, would indicate that familiar situations are more facilitative (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986)[8].

The results of the present study direct us towards several paths of investigation. We consider the implications of the methodological and instructional weaknesses to be crucial. A more complete description of American English refusal strategies is required. Without this information, it is impossible to begin to design accurate lessons on American English refusals. In addition, information about the saliency of the constituents would be useful when considering what to teach. If we knew which elements of refusals were most salient to native speakers, instruction might focus on those elements. In addition, we need more information about the role(s) of direct teaching, amount of practice, awareness building, and level of English ability in developing pragmatic competence. We recognize that teachers and researchers continually question themselves about these same issues in all aspects of second language acquisition.

Methodologically, the usefulness of DQs and DCTs with NNSs needs to be investigated. Beebe, in her study of NNS-NS interactions concluded[9] that DCTs are "a highly effective means" for "studying the stereotypical perceived requirements for a socially appropriate (though not always polite) response," and for "ascertaining the canonical shape of refusals, apologies, partings, etc. in the minds of the speakers of that language," while acknowledging that they do not capture the "range of formulas and strategies used" or "the number of repetitions and elaborations that occur" (1985:10-11). Our data seems to indicate that the weaknesses of DQs and DCTs for data collection exist when they are used with NNSs, but the strengths do not necessarily hold. The realization of a "stereotypical perceived response" and the "canonical shape" may be limited by linguistic ability and perceived (or real) difficulty using a particular mode (telephone, for example). Much of what we know about speech act realization and pragmatic transfer has been ascertained using these measures. Their validity, especially for second language users, must be re-examined.[10]

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[1] Since homework is usually not considered to be a fun, spare time activity, the researchers did not really expect the participants to do the optional homework assignments. It was included, however, to reinforce the idea that students could and should apply the instruction to their daily lives.

[2] In an effort to get data which was at least semi-authentic, approximately 10 hours of television programming was videotaped. The only refusals found were two direct refusals: both a refusal to answer a personal question from an interviewer. While it may be tempting to conclude from this that refusals are rarely offered in daily discourse, it seems more likely that this was due to the programs which were recorded and or a function of topics/settings/roles which are standard on television.

[3] These terms are based on Y. A. Cohen (1961), cited in *Talking with Americans* (Sharpe, 1984).

[4] It is unclear whether "friend" connotes intimate or acquaintance and thus whether refusals need to be brief or elaborated. In writing the discourse questionnaire the researchers' original aim was for this situation to gauge the shape of refusals to intimates (with reference to Wolfson, 1988). However, the DQ was based on the DCT of Beebe et al. (1990) which did not seem to use the term "friend" to indicate "intimate." The use of the word was problematic throughout the instructional component and in the interpretation of the literature.

[5] An utterance is a portion of the written response; it was termed as such because participants were instructed to write what they would say in actual speech.

[6] Each line is a participant's conversational turn. Interviewer responses have been omitted.

[7] See Thomas' (1983) discussion of the distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure, and how these should be treated.

[8] See also discussion in Cohen & Olshtain (1993:47) concerning the use of known/unknown roles and situations in the data.

[9] Beebe includes several other specific conclusions concerning the problems with and effectiveness of DCTs.

[10] Presented at the International TESOL Conference (1993) in Atlanta, GA. Our thanks to Kristine Billmyer for her help with this project and her comments on the paper. Thanks also to Andrew Cohen for his responses to questions.

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Appendix 1: Participant Profiles

Name	Age	L1	Country of Origin	Length of Stay in U.S.
Yiannis	22	Greek	Cyprus	8 mos.
Yukiko	26	Japanese	Japan	2 mos.
Rina	24	Japanese	Japan	10 mos.
Maria	27	Spanish	Ecuador	1 mo.
Teruyuki (Teru)	19	Japanese	Japan	18 mos.
Yukihide (Yuki)	25	Japanese	Japan	24 mos.

Appendix 2: Discourse Questionnaire

Name _____

Instructions: Please read the following situations. After each situation you will be asked to write a response in the blank after "you." Respond as you would in actual conversation.

1. You are a very busy professor. A student wants to speak with you about an assignment, but you do not have any time this week.

Student: Could I meet with you tomorrow morning to discuss my assignment?

You: _____

_____

_____

2. You and your friend have one class together. Your friend invites you to study together at her/his house. You don't want to.

Your friend: Do you want to study tonight at my house?

You: _____

_____

_____

3. After class one evening a student in your class offers you a ride home. It is cold and dark and you would be happy to get home quickly.

Student: I have my car here. Do you want a ride home?

You: _____

_____

_____

4. A professor invites you to his/her house for a dinner party. But you are not able to attend.

Professor: I am having some people over to my house for dinner this Saturday. Would you like to come?

You: _____

_____

_____

5. Your boss invites you to eat lunch with her/him. You think that you should go with your boss to have lunch.

Boss: There are a few things I would like to discuss with you. Can you have lunch with me today?

You: _____

_____

_____

6. Your professor wants you to help plan a class party. But you are very busy this week.

Professor: We need some people to plan the class party. Do you think you can help?

You: _____

_____

_____

7. A student at your school asks you to give your signature for a political cause. But you do not want to.

Stranger: Could you sign this petition please?

You: _____

_____

_____

8. Your friend and classmate has been sick and not able to attend classes. S/he wants to borrow your class notes. You understand the situation and are willing to help by lending the notes.

Friend: I've missed an entire week of class. Would you mind giving me your notes to copy? I'll return them tomorrow.

You: _____

_____

_____

9. You are the boss of a big corporation and one of your employees is having a big party. You will not be able to attend.

Employee: I am having a party on Saturday night. I was wondering if you would like to come.

You: _____

_____

_____

Appendix 3: Coding Categories

I. Direct
- A. Performative verb
- B. Nonperformative statement
  - 1 "No"
  - 2 Negative ability/willingness

II. Indirect
- A. Regret
- B. Wish
- C. Excuse, reason, explanation
- D. Statement of alternative
  - 1. I can do X instead of Y
  - 2. Why don't you do ...
- E. Set condition for acceptance
- F. Promise of future acceptance
- G. Statement of principle
- H. Statement of philosophy
- I. Attempt to dissuade
  - 1. Threat
  - 2. Guilt trip
  - 3. Criticism
  - 4. Request empathy
  - 5. Let interlocutor off the hook
  - 6. Self-defense
  - 7. Question validity of request
- J. Acceptance functioning as a refusal
- K. Avoidance
  - 1. Non-Verbal
    - a. Silence
    - b. Hesitation
    - c. Do nothing
    - d. Physical departure
  - 2. Verbal
    - a. Topic switch
    - b. Joke
    - c. Repetition of part of request
    - d. Indefinite postponement
    - e. Hedge
    - f. Request information

III. Adjuncts to Refusal
- 1. Positive feeling/opinion
- 2. Statement of empathy
- 3. Pause filler
- 4. Gratitude

IV. Other
- 1. Inappropriate or uncodable
- 2. "True" Postponement
- 3. Acceptance
- 4. Ambiguous response